

**Sally Casanova Scholarship  
Essay Questions and Scoring Rubric**

**Essay Questions:**

1. Describe the field of study in which you would like to pursue a doctoral degree and the research questions or theoretical perspectives that interest you in this field. Although you should be specific, please use language that someone outside of your discipline would understand.
2. What elements of your educational, research, community service and/or personal experience have contributed to your interest in and preparation for pursuing doctoral study, and your determination to succeed in it?
3. Many professionals with doctoral degrees enter careers to serve as college and university faculty, and most faculty serve a diverse student body. Describe your interest in a faculty career and experience you have had, or plan to have, that would prepare you for it.

**Scoring Rubric:**

**Criteria #1: Academic record strength**

*Applicant excelled in coursework in their undergraduate career (last 60 units). Or, if applicable, master's as identified in their overall G.P.A.*

- 4 - applicant demonstrates truly outstanding academic achievements
- 3 - applicant demonstrates strong academic achievements
- 2 - applicant demonstrates moderate academic achievements
- 1 - applicant fails to demonstrate academic achievements

**Criteria #2: Robustness of letter of recommendation**

*Letter from faculty mentor indicates applicant is held in extremely high regard in academics and research and shows a strong interest in mentoring the applicant*

- 4 - letter indicates that nominee is in top 5% of students and the recommender holds them in extremely high regard
- 3 - letter indicates strong support and the applicant has good potential
- 2 - letter of recommendation shows support, but does not indicate the applicant has good potential
- 1 - recommender had not worked closely with the applicant or did not offer strong support

**Criteria #3: Clarity and relevance of budget**

*Applicant shows a budget plan and clear potential to use the funds as a stepping stone to a Ph.D. program*

- 4 - applicant has provided a strong and realistic budget that shows balance in visits to campuses, attendance at professional meetings, application fees and other areas
- 3 - applicant's budget is good but may not show strong support in pursuing Ph.D. programs
- 2 - applicant's budget seems somewhat unrealistic in some areas and doesn't strongly support the pursuit of a Ph.D. program
- 1 - applicant provided a budget that is unrealistic and doesn't provide strong support for pursuit of a Ph.D. program

**Criteria #4: Caliber of research experience**

*Applicant has articulated a clear research interest based on their education, research, community service and/or personal experiences*

- 4 - applicant has defined a strong research interest and clearly defines how it was determined and how they are prepared to succeed in a Ph.D. program
- 3 - applicant has defined a research interest and moderately shows how it was determined and they are prepared to succeed in a Ph.D. program
- 2 - applicant has briefly defined a research interest and shows minimally how this will prepare them to succeed in a Ph.D. program
- 1 - applicant has not defined a research interest, or how it will prepare them to succeed in a Ph.D. program

**Criteria #5: Description of doctoral field of study with support in research questions or theoretical perspectives**

*Applicant clearly describes their field of doctoral study with supportive research questions and/or theoretical perspectives*

- 4 - applicant has clearly defined doctoral field of study with strong support of research questions and theoretical perspectives
- 3 - applicant has a moderately defined doctoral field of study, but research questions and theoretical perspectives are not fully developed
- 2 - applicant has a minimally defined doctoral field of study, but research questions and theoretical perspectives are unrelated and unclear
- 1 - applicant has not shown desire for doctoral study and research questions and theoretical perspectives are unrelated and of poor quality

**Criteria #6: Desire to pursue a career as faculty with a diverse student body**

*Applicant is either diverse or has articulated plans to increase diversity of graduate student population.*

- 4 - applicant has clearly articulated how they will pursue a career as faculty and have an impact on diversity through deliberate action
- 3 - applicant shows a moderate level of interest in becoming faculty and increasing diversity
- 2 - applicant comes from a diverse background but does not relate that becoming to faculty or to increasing diversity
- 1 - applicant is neither a diverse student nor interested in becoming faculty or increasing diversity of the student population

**Criteria #7: Overall score of the applicant**

*Based on all of the above areas, the overall score for this applicant*

- 4 - applicant has demonstrated a consistent score of 4 in all areas and clearly excels in all areas
- 3 - applicant has mostly scores of 3 and 4 in all above areas
- 2 - applicant has mostly scores of 2 and 3 in all above areas
- 1 - applicant has mostly scores of 1 and 2 in all above areas

Materials submitted with application for evaluation include the demographic information on the scholar, proposed budget, letter of recommendation from a faculty mentor, transcripts from all college coursework and three essays.